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45. (new) A method for treating bone loss in a patient comprising administering to the patient an expression vector comprising a nucleic acid sequence encoding osteoprotegerin, wherein the nucleic acid sequence is selected from the group consisting of:

a) a nucleic acid encoding a polypeptide comprising the amino acid sequence from residues 1 to 401 or from residues 22 to 401 as shown in Figure 9B (SEQ ID NO:6); and

b) a nucleic acid which hybridizes under high stringency conditions with the sequences as shown in Figure 2B (SEQ ID NO:1), Figure 9A (SEQ ID NO:3) or Figure 9B (SEQ ID NO:5) and encodes a polypeptide having the activity of inhibiting bone resorption.

46. (new) The method of Claim 45 wherein the expression vector is a viral vector.

47. (new) The method of Claim 45 wherein the expression vector further comprises a pharmaceutically acceptable adjuvant.

48. (new) The method of Claim 45 wherein the bone loss is a result of osteoporosis, Paget's disease, osteomyelitis, hypercalcemia, osteopenia associated with surgery, disease or steroid administration, osteonecrosis associated with injury or disease, arthritis, periodontal disease, and osteolytic metastasis.

REMARKS

Applicants have canceled Claims 1-44 which are pending in the parent application, U.S. Serial No. 08/577,788 without prejudice and reserve the right to introduce claims relating to the subject matter therein in timely filed continuation applications.

Claims 45-48 have been added which are directed to treatment of bone loss by administering an expression vector comprising a nucleic acid encoding osteoprotegerin. It is believed that the claims do not introduce new matter or new issues requiring search. Entry of the new claims is respectfully requested.

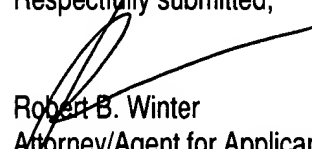
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Applicant: Boyle et al.
Serial No. Divisional of 077,788
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CONCLUSION

It is submitted that Claims 45-48 are in condition for allowance and an early notice thereof is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,


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